

“Shifting Views” tour – Expected and Unexpected Connections

Each one of us comes through these museum doors with our own perspective based on our upbringing, our belief system, experiences, and who we interact with in our communities. Today, on this tour I invite you to use your perspective to look at art through several different lenses, such as: personal, historical, gender, race/ethnicity, empathy, spiritual, and storytelling. The hope is that you’ll gain a broader and deeper sense of the artists and their work and that you’ll feel a connection between yourself, your experiences, and other people from around the world, across time, and through various cultures.

1. Vera Lutter (Germany, b. 1960), Temple of Nettuno. Paestum XVI (2015) (242) (if on view)

- a. **Label.** Trained in sculpture and later in photography and related media, Vera Lutter has created large-scale pinhole photographs since the early 1990s. Her subjects are often architecture, landscape, cityscape, and communication and transportation infrastructures. With a deep interest in archaeology and classical architecture, Lutter, for the first time, photographed a Greek temple, and created Temple of Nettuno. Built in c. 460 – 450 BC, the temple is one of the best-preserved Greek architectures. Thus, Lutter identified Temple of Nettuno most suitable for a long exposure. To create a large-size unique print, she first sets up a room-sized camera obscura to capture black and white negative images. (Photographic paper is affixed to a wall inside of a camera obscura, opposite to a wall where an aperture is.) An image from outside is projected upside-down through an aperture and fixed on the photographic paper. As the work title indicates, she gave a full day exposure to create the work in a cloudless beautiful day.
- b. **See also** documents on computer desktop.
- c. **Historical lens.** 1) ancient Greece as the source for many of Western Civilization’s (and the US’s) most cherished traditions and values: republicanism, architecture, definitions of beauty and perfection; 2) photography and its impact on both everyday life and art.
- d. **Photography lens.** 1) Discuss Lutter’s use of the camera obscura and how different camera lenses can affect the photographic image produced; 2) discuss photography as a means of capturing the world as it moves and changes through



The diver scene has been interpreted in various ways. Death and diving were connected in the Greek mind. It is suggested that the dive is meant to depict the moment of death. “the diver dives alone, isolated against the sky. There is present all the intensity of the moment of death.” https://www.brown.edu/Departments/Joukowsky_Institute/courses/greekpast/4716.html

time.

- e. **Spiritual lens.** 1) focus their attention on the artist's use of contrasting light and dark and ask how that makes them feel; 2) discuss "light" as a metaphor for enlightenment here and in art generally; 3) link our contemporary feelings about our mortality with that of the ancient Greeks via "Tomb of the Diver" fresco (on iPad).
- f. **Viewer response lens.** 1) share my recent visit to Paestum (iPad photos) and what it felt like to walk in and around the Temple of Neptune, see the Tomb of the Diver, etc.; 2) ask tour participants to share their personal "cultural exchange" experiences.

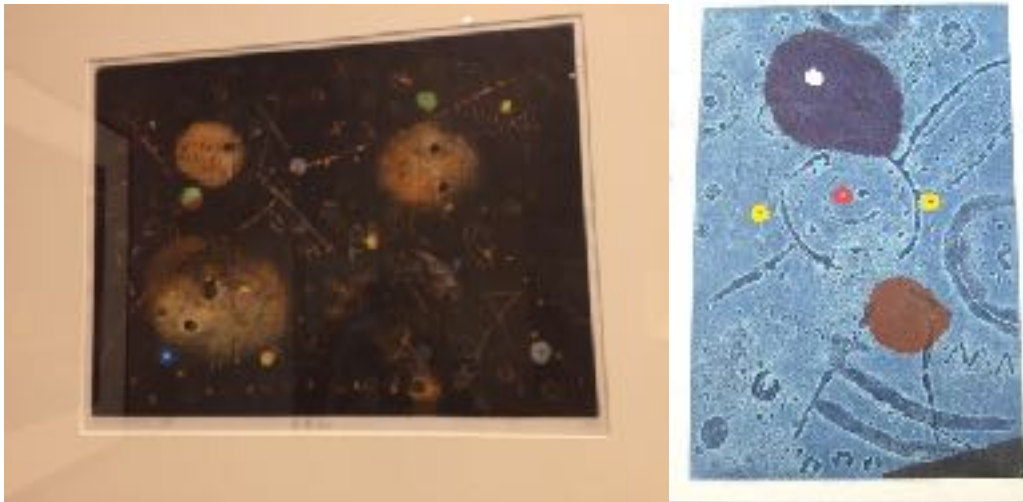


2. **Hagiwara Hideo (Japan, 1913 - 2007), A Nebula No. 3 (1987) and Starlit Night No. 6 (1980) (226)**

- a. **Panel.** Hideo Hagiwara was a Japanese artist who worked mainly with woodblock prints. He was born in Kōfu, Yamanashi. Between 1921 and 1929 he lived in Korea and Manchuria. He studied at the Tokyo School of Fine Arts, where he graduated at the Oil Painting Section in 1938. While still there he attended Un'ichi Hiratsuka's extracurricular woodblock printing course, and in the same year he became quality controller at the Takamizawa Woodblock Print Company. He was conscripted into the army in 1943. In 1945 he had lost his house, his atelier and nearly all his early works. Around 1950 he had sufficiently recovered to start painting again. At the same time he started making Sōsaku Hanga, both figurative and abstract prints. He was known as a constant innovator and he was generally considered one of the best post-World War II Sōsaku Hanga artists.
- b. **Definition of nebula.** A nebula is a formation in space which is constituted mostly of helium, dust, and other gases in various concentrations. The shape and size of a nebula varies, and as such there can be various types of formations having different sizes. Very often, they are huge in size, and their diameters can be a number of light years across. It is derived from Latin, and as such means a cloud. It is not clear how exactly a nebula is formed, but it is believed that they are formed by the collapsing of interstellar medium, which then come together because of the gravitational pull of the particles. Nebula is an important object for observation by researchers, who derive significant information about the formation process of stars and planets. A nebula is

capable of exerting a gravitational pull, and the force is derived from the particles which come together to form the nebula. With more particles coming together, not only does the nebula increase in proportion, but its gravitational pull also gathers more power and intensity. A nebula is also believed to be one of the primary stages in the formation of stars. Scientists are of the opinion that a nebula can be used to create a trajectory of stellar evolution. There are various nebulae that are in existence at present, though numerous others may exist in the far-flung corners of space that remain to be observed. Some of the most popular ones are Pelican, Crab, Eagle, and Ring Nebula, with Ring being among the most observed ones on the planet.

- c. **See also** documents on computer desktop.
- d. **Storytelling lens.** What do viewers see going on here? What story can you tell based on what you see in this work? Is the story believable or fantastic? How has the artist used symbolism? Who do you think wrote the letters in the sky?
- e. **Scientific lens.** How does our perception of this painting - and our world – change by shifting our lens from telescopic to microscopic.
- f. **Spiritual lens.** Does this artwork evoke a sense of the spiritual? How/why? How does this artwork affect our view of our own world?



3. **Thierry Oussou (Beninese, b. 1988), *Confidant* (2017) (254)**

- a. **Label.** Thierry Oussou has said he appreciates the artistic medium of paper for its fragility – as it easily rumples, tears, and even burns. For Oussou, paper represents the frailty of the human condition. The title of the work, *Confidant*, refers to his grandfather, in whom Oussou used to confide. Oussou made this collage when he lived in Amsterdam, and his grandfather was dying in Benin, West Africa. Oussou was filled with helplessness – he lacked resources to go back home - and made the artwork as a therapeutic means to deal with his feelings.
- b. **See also** documents on computer desktop.

- c. **Storytelling lens.** What do viewers see going on here? What story can you tell based on what you see in this work? Is the story believable or fantastic? How has the artist used symbolism?
- d. **Gallery lens.** Look around this gallery. What symbolic, media, or other connections with this artwork do you notice? How is it different from the rest of the art in this room? What might that tell you about this artist, if anything?
- e. **IDEA lens.** How does this work address race and heritage? Cultural conflict, exchange, or appropriation?
- f. **Empathy lens.** How do you think this person feels? What do you see that makes you say that? How does this work make you feel?



4. **Jaune Quick-to-See Smith (American [Salish, Nehiyyawak and Aqwi-Dika], born 1940), What is an American? (2003) (261)**
- a. **Label.** Jaune Quick-To-See Smith is an acclaimed contemporary Native American artist who works in a variety of media. Her work explores important themes of Native American culture like assimilation, tradition, stereotypes, and interactions of contemporary Native Americans in today’s world. The central figure of this work is an anonymous Native American male who wears a bandolier bag, traditional-style choker and necklace, decorated leggings, and a frockcoat. The blood coming out of the figure’s left hand references the colors of the American flag. Considering that Native Americans volunteer for military service during wartime at a higher rate than any other group per capita, Quick-to-See Smith asks, “Who is an American”?
 - b. **See also** documents on computer desktop.
 - c. **Storytelling lens.** What story can you tell based on what you see in this work? Where could the story go from here?
 - d. **Historical lens.** Why do you think the artist created this work? What do you think is the artist’s point of view?

- e. **IDEA lens.** How does this work address ethnicity and heritage? What images of the “other” are portrayed? How does it reflect cultural conflict, appropriation, exchange, or fluency?



5. Helena Hernmarck (American, [Swedish], b. 1941), Moot (1971) (275)

- a. **Label.** This tapestry was designed to hang in Case Western Reserve Law School’s moot courtroom, a space where law students practiced arguing in court. because the tapestry was meant to hang in front of a chalkboard, Helena Hernmarck divided it into two panels that would slide right and left whenever one needed to access the board. Hernmarck’s design includes imagery that references the U.S. legal system, including a scale of justice and the Great Seal of the United States.
- b. **See also** documents on computer desktop.
- c. **Storytelling lens.** What narrative and/or themes do you see in this work? How has the artist used symbolism in it? Does it fit within a category or type of story (historical, romance, psychological, satire, or irony)?
- d. **Gallery lens.** Walk to the other end of the gallery and look at this artwork again. What do you see now that you didn’t see before? Why? What can’t you see as well?
- e. **Historical lens.** Why do you think the artist created this work? What do you think is the artist’s point of view? How would you define or depict justice? What symbols might you use?
- f. **Gender lens.** Consider the gender of the artist and the characters and/or items portrayed: what role, if any, does gender play in this work? Are gender stereotypes reinforced or undermined? Imagine viewing the work from the point of view of someone from the opposite gender. Do you see it differently?



6. **Joe Minter (African American, b. 1943), Voyage in Chains (2000) (375) (The Enduring Soul exhibit) -- OPPORTUNITY FOR SHARE-PAIR ACTIVITY --**

- a. **Label.** The secret force of a powerful primeval energy within the soul. *Voyage in Chains* connects me to my birth in the Mississippi Delta in 1943: beautiful circular motion of objects used by sharecropping farmers to cultivate the hard rock dry lands in rural Mississippi. I remember my father's daily motions, rhythms, and expressions of joy at sunrise. I remember my father's cosmic spirituality and laborious meditation, a sacred tradition of hard work and unceasing effort. My father and ancestors of his generation came to a place of the sounds and rhythms of the souls' wisdom. The pitchfork, the hoe, the shovel, the irons; a quadruple expression of symbols evoking the core consciousness of man's soul. A visible manifestation of the hand of man. The will of man connected to the forces in creation. The serpent's tongue probing the heavens in alignment with the soul of creator in creation.
- b. **See also** documents on computer desktop.
- c. **Storytelling lens.** What narrative and/or themes do you see in this work? How has the artist used symbolism in it? Does it fit within a category or type of story (historical, romance, psychological, satire, or irony)?
- d. **Historical lens.** Why do you think the artist created this work? What do you think is the artist's point of view?
- e. **Socio-economic lens.** What does this work say about class structures and/or social issues?
- f. **IDEA lens.** How does this work address ethnicity and heritage? What images of the "other" are portrayed? How does it reflect cultural conflict, appropriation, exchange, or fluency?



Thank you for going on this tour with me, exploring art through various different lenses. As I mentioned in the beginning, the hope is that you walk away today with a broader and deeper sense of the artists and their artwork. I do hope you've also gained a feeling of connection between your experiences and those of other people from around the world, across time, and through various cultures. And when you come back to Mia again and you're looking at art on your own, just begin by asking yourself, what do I see? what do I think? and what do I still wonder about? What history is the artist recording? What story are they telling? What does the artist value? What are their concerns? What perceptions and experiences might I have in common with them?